

Strike in Baltimore ends after 74 days

BALTIMORE
 An "unwilling vacation" of 74 days ended for Baltimore's daily newspapers at 11:10 a.m. Tuesday, March 17, when the first edition of the *News American* since January 2 came off the presses. The *Evening Sun* followed with a press run at 11:22 a.m.

The *News American* of the Hearst group printed a 56-page post-strike edition and the *Evening Sun* had 64 pages, including an eight-page supplement containing highlights of news of the past 10 weeks.

For Wednesday morning the *Sun* came out with a 64-page paper with a press run close to 200,000.

The strike, begun by the pressmen, ended Friday, March 13, when the pressmen voted, 207 to 36, to accept a new three-year contract with wage provisions similar to those given in agreements with the stereotypers and printers.

The pressmen's base pay was \$164 a week. The printers' pay will reach \$212 a week in the third year of the contract.

The settlement provides wage and fringe benefits valued at \$56.50 a week but the unions are taking it in different forms. The company will make larger payments for hospital and medical insurance and a fourth week of paid vacation will be granted in 1972, after four years of employment. Previously the fourth week was earned after six years of tenure.

Base pay for pressmen has been \$164 a week. They get

raises of \$18.75, \$15 and \$13 in the period of the contract, with \$1.25 toward pensions at once. In the second year those over 65, if still employed, may choose to have Medicare payments made by the company.

Printers pay will go to \$212 a week in the third year, after raises of \$20, \$15 and \$12. Pension contributions will be increased by \$1 in the third year.

Stereotypers are taking \$15, \$15 and \$12 in cash, \$5 for pensions in the first and second years and \$1 in the third year.

The company insurance policy of \$4,000 drops to \$1,500 past age 65.

Agreements with provisions for arbitration of grievances were negotiated with mailers. Contracts with other unions have later expiration dates: the engravers in April, the guild in June and the teamsters in July.

The last previous strike, which lasted 45 days in 1965, was called by the guild.

During this year's shutdown of the *Sunpapers* and the *News American*, weekly newspapers and shoppers in communities around Baltimore benefited from increased advertising and circulation, but two strike-born papers failed to attract much support from merchants.

Copies of papers from Philadelphia and Washington were always in demand, even at 25 cents weekdays and \$1 on Sunday. In some sections dealers said they got \$2 for a Sunday edition of the *New York Times*.

Non-striking newsmen were kept busy preparing features

and helping with news coverage on the radio and television stations affiliated with the newspapers.

About a dozen guild members worked on an information project of the Social Security Administration for a month. Others worked for weeklies and some went to newspapers outside of Baltimore.

The *Sun* reported that the Retail Merchants Association attributed a 10 percent decrease in business to the shutdown of the newspapers, despite the use of television for promotion. Small items could not be effectively pushed on radio or television, a spokesman for the retailers said.

Sales of cars were said to be down 25 to 30 percent and real estate sales dropped more than 30 percent. Also affected, the *Sun* said, were sports events and stage shows.